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General and complete disarmament

Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. On 8 December 2010, the General Assembly adopted resolution 65/54, entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation". In operative paragraph 8 of the resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the issue of the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and to submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-sixth session.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 24 March 2011, a note verbale was sent to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are reproduced in section II below. Additional replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Australia

[Original: English]
[1 June 2011]

Australia's strong commitment to multilateral principles and approaches in the field of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament is indisputable, and we have consistently advocated the benefit of multilateral processes in achieving progress on international security issues.

Australia regards the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as the cornerstone of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. In July 2010, Australia and Japan established a multi-country non-proliferation and disarmament initiative to take forward the 2010 NPT Review Conference outcomes. The establishment of the initiative reaffirms Australia's commitment and high priority to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in the multilateral context.

We also continue to actively pursue entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the immediate commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.

Australia was therefore disappointed that once again we were unable to support this resolution at the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Australia cannot agree that multilateralism constitutes the sole principle in negotiations on disarmament and non-proliferation, as is implied in operative paragraphs 1 and 2 of this resolution. In Australia's view, effective progress on global non-proliferation and disarmament objectives requires a combination of multilateral, plurilateral, regional, bilateral and unilateral measures working to reinforce each other in order to achieve concrete results.

Preambular paragraph 8 of the resolution specifically recognizes the complementarity of such measures, and in the future we hope that the operative paragraphs of this resolution will reflect this understanding.

In Australia's view, the assertion that multilateralism provides the only sustainable method of addressing non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament

issues disregards the potential of alternative measures such as bilateral and regional measures to address global security issues. The matters at stake are simply too vital. The international community cannot afford not to make use of all measures available to improve the global security environment.

Australia, together with Canada and New Zealand, submitted an explanation of our abstention from the vote on the resolution at UNGA 65.

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[2 May 2011]

Lebanon supports the adoption of effective measures to counter the dangers that threaten international security and peace as a result of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It supports disarmament and arms regulation agreements resulting from multilateral negotiations with the participation of a large number of countries, regardless of their size and power, with the goal of reaching complete disarmament under strict international control. It believes that the promotion of multilateralism is a core principle in negotiations in this area with a view to establishing universal norms and enlarging their scope. It renews and fulfils its commitments to multilateral cooperation as an important means of pursuing and achieving common objectives in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation at a time when Israel's maintenance of an enormous arsenal of weapons of mass destruction continues to pose a direct threat not only to Lebanon but to all States in the region, even endangering international peace and security.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[14 June 2011]

Mexico believes that progress in respect of the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation is an essential element for building trust and preventing conflicts among States.

In this regard, Mexico has always expressed support for disarmament with a view to achieving greater international stability on the basis of the principles of the maintenance of international peace and security; to that end, it suggests the following steps:

(a) To urge the nuclear-weapon States to reduce the size of their nuclear arsenals, thereby reducing the nuclear threat in the near future;

(b) To promote the development of greater measures of transparency in the nuclear field, particularly in respect of the implementation of the relevant international treaties, the agreements reached by the international community and as a voluntary measure to build confidence so as to continue to progress in nuclear disarmament;

(c) To seek agreements aimed at the reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons;

(d) To continue to urge States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction to fulfil their obligations without delay, particularly with regard to the prompt destruction of all their chemical arsenals;

(e) To promote universal accession to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, particularly among the States of annex 2, in order to ensure its early entry into force;

(f) To strengthen the protocols regarding the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, which are, for the most part, acquired through illicit channels;

(g) To seek the establishment of a treaty on the arms trade which would include a system of marking, the registration of firearms and ammunition and of ballistic fingerprints on weapons involved in crimes, and control of the sale of weapons.

At the domestic level, Mexico is carrying out the following actions in relation to the promotion of disarmament and non-proliferation:

(a) **Mexico is enforcing and implementing the legally binding** instruments to which it is a party;

(b) Mexico regards disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy as pillars in the building of a world free from the threat of nuclear weapons;

(c) It is contributing at the national level through the participation of military personnel in regional and international forums, the submission of reports to the United Nations and the Organization of American States, the provision of advice on undertaking various international commitments and through the enforcement of its domestic legislation, specifically the implementation of the federal law on firearms and explosives;

(d) Administrative and legal measures are being implemented to prevent and avoid the proliferation of conventional weapons, harmonizing existing legislation to regulate and control the import and export of weapons, powders and explosives, chemical devices and substances and materials that can be used for weapons manufacture;

(e) Mexico does not produce, stockpile, possess or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, anti-personnel mines or cluster munitions.

Lastly, Mexico notes that arms regulation is complicated at the international level by the absence of a mechanism for standardization, for either conventional or non-conventional weapons, and because there is no catalogue of weapons and ammunition.

Panama

[Original: Spanish]
[2 June 2011]

In recent years our country has undertaken global, bilateral and *multilateral* initiatives at the regional, hemispheric and international levels, as well as domestic

mechanisms to promote non-proliferation and to counter the non-proliferation of current asymmetrical threats (at border points, ports and airports). We can therefore say that our cooperation is international and accepted. With regard to disarmament, the national Constitution establishes that Panama cannot have an army. However, import and export controls are applied to war materiel and related elements pursuant to the agreements concluded and the policies and standards laid down in such agreements.

Qatar

[Original: English]
[12 May 2011]

The Government of the State of Qatar is of the view that promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation lies in the necessary ratification of all countries to the treaties that ban weapons of mass destruction as well as cooperation in full transparency with the organizations responsible for the implementation of these treaties.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]
[27 April 2011]

As a global as well as European actor, Spain must firmly commit itself to the reforms of multilateralism, which necessitates a greater engagement in the renewal of our international relations as well as of our mechanisms and institutions.

A responsible non-proliferation and disarmament policy requires the promotion of an effective multilateral system. To that end it will be necessary:

- To seek comprehensive political solutions that prevent, discourage or stop recourse to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or conventional weapons;
- To integrate policy on non-proliferation and disarmament into general security policy;
- To consider the possibility of including "non-proliferation clauses" in bilateral and regional relations;
- To promote the universality, defence and strengthening of international treaties, conventions, agreements and regimes;
- To strengthen the role of the United Nations Security Council;
- To promote the national implementation of international obligations;
- To improve the effectiveness of verification mechanisms through political, economic and technical support and to make them more intrusive;
- To strengthen systems of import and export control with respect to defence and dual-use materials and to increase the number of parties to such systems;
- To promote international information exchange;

- To strengthen technical assistance among States and cooperation for development;
- To promote legal and responsible trade in defence materials and dual-use technologies, and prevent illicit trafficking;
- To facilitate collaboration among government agencies, non-governmental organizations and industries that share the same objective.

Only an effective multilateral system can successfully tackle the threat to international peace and security posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in combination with other phenomena such as international terrorism, transnational organized crime, failed States, and regional conflicts.

Turkmenistan

[Original: Russian]
[25 May 2011]

At its sixty-fifth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 65/54, entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation", which refers to General Assembly resolution 56/24T of 29 November 2001 on multilateral cooperation in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and global efforts against terrorism. The resolution was adopted on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations in order to maintain international peace and security; to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace; and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace.

Pursuant to this resolution the United Nations Disarmament Commission carries out necessary and useful work to develop confidence-building measures and ensure transparency in the area of conventional weapons, underlying the importance of multilateralism in addressing these matters. The United Nations Disarmament Commission is one of the most suitable platforms for international efforts to step up multilateral disarmament diplomacy, to strengthen existing international non-proliferation and arms control mechanisms, and to establish new such instruments. In 1998, the post of a Special Coordinator on transparency was established. Transparency in armaments is a factor that helps to strengthen mutual confidence, prevent destabilizing supplies of arms and create an atmosphere conducive to comprehensive disarmament.

In addressing disarmament issues, the advocacy and awareness-raising activities of the United Nations Department for Disarmament are aimed at ensuring balanced military spending, preventing the threat of nuclear war and co nbating the illicit trafficking in weapons.

On 12 December 1995, a General Assembly resolution recognized the permanent neutral status of Turkmenistan. On that basis, a Constitutional Law on the permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan was issued on 27 December 1995. This Law proclaims the permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan and is the foundation of its domestic and foreign policy, which is designed to strengthen stability and social

harmony and to develop friendly and mutually beneficial relations with States in the region and around the world.

A fundamental condition for Turkmenistan, arising from its neutral status and international obligations, is the peace-loving nature of its foreign policy. Accordingly, all matters are addressed exclusively through political and diplomatic channels, primarily the Charter of the United Nations and authoritative international organizations. The foreign policy of Turkmenistan, which aims to develop ties with other States and international bodies and to establish a human and constructive order in the world, has played a beneficial role in ensuring regional peace and security, a priority issue for the international community.

The neutral status of Turkmenistan, its foreign policy doctrine of non-affiliation with any blocs and its rejection of the use of force as a means of resolving international disputes predetermine its stance with regard to peace and security. In this context, Turkmenistan fully supports international efforts to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In its legislation, Turkmenistan proclaims its refusal to possess, manufacture, store or transport nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and other types of weapons of mass destruction or related technologies.

In his statement at the sixty-second session of the General Assembly on 26 September 2007 in New York, the President of Turkmenistan, affirming the peace-loving policy of Turkmenistan and its multilateral cooperation in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation of various weapons, said the following: "The legislation of Turkmenistan proclaims the refusal of our State to possess, manufacture, store or transport nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and other types of weapons of mass destruction or related technologies. Recently, in 2005, the People's Council of Turkmenistan decided to adopt a Statement on Supporting the Initiatives of International Organizations to Combat the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. In 2006, in Semipalatinsk, Turkmenistan, together with other States of the region, signed the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia. That document is unique in many ways, since, for the first time since the Second World War, it proclaims the establishment of a vast region free of nuclear weapons on the map of the northern hemisphere. It is noteworthy that our joint initiative echoes the aspirations of the majority of countries and that it has been highly acclaimed by the international community and endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly."

The signature of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia by the five Central Asian States (the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan) is thus a clear example of multilateral efforts to address disarmament and non-proliferation issues. The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region is an important factor in maintaining peace, regional stability and fruitful cooperation among our countries, a collective contribution towards the gradual development of a global community and, of course, an important element in enhancing regional security and nuclear disarmament.

Turkmenistan has ratified a number of international conventions and agreements for the implementation of its disarmament obligations: the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction; the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development,

Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction; the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction; the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings; the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition; and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Turkmenistan is not involved in the manufacture of arms and no arms of any kind are transported through its State territory. Accordingly, Turkmenistan is fulfilling its disarmament and non-proliferation obligations, meeting its commitment to prevent threats to international peace and security, and supporting joint disarmament and non-proliferation efforts by the international community as a whole.

The International Conference on Disarmament in Central Asia and the Caspian Basin, held on 24 June 2010 in Ashgabat under the aegis of the United Nations with the participation of the current Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Secretary of State and Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Kanat Saudabayev, represented a concrete step towards implementing the international initiatives of Turkmenistan proposed by the President of Turkmenistan at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly and supported by the Secretary-General. It will be recalled that representatives of the following major international and regional organizations were involved in the work of this inclusive Conference: the Commonwealth of Independent States; the Shanghai Cooperation Organization; the Organization of the Islamic Conference; the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization; and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. The participating States were Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Under the leadership of the President of Turkmenistan, a clearly defined national position has been developed and is being upheld with respect to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Turkmenistan welcomes the constructive proposals of the international community and certain States aimed at facilitating global disarmament processes and, guided by national and regional priorities, stands ready to participate in these efforts. In that context, Turkmenistan is playing an active role in disarmament efforts in the cause of peace, harmony and shared progress.

The aforementioned Conference extensively reviewed and analysed the disarmament situation and the participation of the States of Central Asia and the Caspian Basin in relevant agreements; a compelling discussion was held on the international legal framework for disarmament and how it can be enhanced; and attention was paid to the role of international organizations in solving these issues at the global and regional levels and to the possibility of them providing assistance to the States of the region in such matters.

Stressing the need for careful study of the extensive experience in the area of disarmament accumulated by international and regional organizations, and primarily the United Nations, participants mentioned the special significance of the activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, which is today assigned an important role in creating an effective model for concerned cooperation and coordination of the disarmament process.

Noting the need for synchronized efforts and consolidation of common interests, participants emphasized that joint work and the adoption of agreed and integrated approaches to security and disarmament issues will eventually be the most effective ways and means of solving pressing problems.

The Ashgabat meeting created a solid platform for the elaboration of concrete measures and an ongoing exchange of views on collective security issues. It therefore promoted the strengthening of peace and stability in the region.

A final document was adopted at the conclusion of the Conference.

In the light of the above, Turkmenistan supports the resolution entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation" and calls on countries to do the same, since compliance with the resolution will help to maintain international peace and security, and to address pressing issues related to disarmament and international security.